

Recommendation for preliminary adoption of amendments to 312 IAC 9-3-14 that govern the chasing and taking of raccoons and opossums, Administrative Cause No. 10-038D

The changes are summarized as follows:

- 1) Extends the raccoon and opossum running season to February 1 through October 25 (it currently runs from Feb. 15 through Oct. 14). The NRC requested the rule change to open the running season on February 1 instead of February 15 as a result of the recommendation by the Natural Resources Advisory Council through the comprehensive fish and wildlife rules enhancement project. The Indiana Sportsman's Roundtable developed a taskforce that consisted of a representative from the Indiana Bowhunter's Association, Indiana Deer Hunter's Association, Furtakers of America, and Indiana Tree Dog Alliance to work on an agreement to an extension to the running season in the fall. This taskforce agreed to an extension of the dog running season for raccoons and opossums until October 25.
- 2) Opens the raccoon and opossum hunting and trapping season on the same day (Nov. 8), adding 7 more days to the trapping season. The raccoon and opossum hunting season currently starts on November 8 and the trapping season currently starts on November 15. This extension will allow for more raccoons and opossums to be taken by trappers.

Staff from the Indiana DNR talked with representatives from the Indiana State Trapper's Association, Furtakers of America (Indiana Chapter), and Indiana Coon Hunter's Association regarding an extension of the raccoon and opossum trapping season. Some individuals have requested that the DNR open the raccoon hunting season earlier than November 8, but the DNR does not believe that opening the season any earlier is warranted at this time. Raccoon fur is not considered to be in the best condition or prime (most valuable) prior to the month of November. Therefore, allowing raccoons and opossums to be taken prior to November 8 would not likely result in any significant number of additional raccoons being taken. Additionally, with the value of raccoon fur being low (avg. price of \$6.49 during the 08-09 trapping season), raccoons would most likely be taken earlier only if trapped accidentally in traps set for other species (such as for coyotes), for dog training purposes, or to retain alive in captivity.

TITLE 312 NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Proposed Rule
LSA Document #10-

DIGEST

Amends 312 IAC 9-3-14 to extend the running season and change the starting date for the trapping season for raccoons and opossums. Effective thirty (30) days after filing with the Publisher.

312 IAC 9-3-14

SECTION 1. 312 IAC 9-3-14 IS AMENDED TO READ AS FOLLOWS:

312 IAC 9-3-14 Opossums and raccoons

Authority: IC 14-10-2-4; IC 14-22-2-6

Affected: IC 14-22; IC 35-47-2

Sec. 14. (a) Except as provided in subsection (b), an individual may:

(1) ~~hunt~~ **take** raccoons and Virginia opossums from ~~noon~~ **8 a.m.** on November 8 until noon on January 31 of the following year.

(2) ~~trap raccoons and Virginia opossums from 8 a.m. on November 15 until noon on January 31 of the following year.~~

(3) chase raccoons and Virginia opossums from noon on February ~~15~~ **1** until noon on October ~~14~~ **25**.

(b) A nonresident may:

~~(1) hunt take raccoons under subsection (a)(1); and~~

~~(2) trap raccoons under subsection (a)(2);~~

only to the extent that these raccoon seasons in the state of the nonresident are open to Indiana residents.

(c) An individual must not do the following:

(1) Possess a firearm, air rifle, or another device capable of taking a raccoon or Virginia opossum while chasing a raccoon or opossum during the chasing season established under subsection (a)(3).

(2) Remove, attempt to remove, dislodge, or attempt to dislodge a raccoon or Virginia opossum from:

(A) a tree hollow;

(B) a hole;

(C) a den;

(D) a pocket;

(E) a cavity;

(F) a burrow;

(G) a tile; or

(H) any other place;

where the raccoon or Virginia opossum has secreted itself for security or protection or in which the raccoon maintains a nest or den.

(d) Notwithstanding subsection (c)(1), an individual may possess a handgun in accordance with IC 35-47 while chasing raccoons and Virginia opossums under this section if the person:

(1) has a valid unlimited license to carry a handgun:

(A) issued under IC 35-47-2-3; or

(B) recognized under IC 35-47-2-21(b); or

(2) is not required to possess a license to carry a handgun under IC 35-47-2-2.

(Natural Resources Commission; 312 IAC 9-3-14; filed May 12, 1997, 10:00 a.m.: 20 IR 2707; filed May 28, 1998, 5:14 p.m.: 21 IR 3714; readopted filed Jul 28, 2003, 12:00 p.m.: 27 IR 286; filed Sep 23, 2004,

AGENDA ITEM #11

3:00 p.m.: 28 IR 540; filed Sep 6, 2007, 12:20 p.m.: 20071003-IR-312070023FRA; filed Apr 4, 2008, 2:56 p.m.: 20080430-IR-312070659FRA)